

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 remain pending in the present application. Clarifying amendments have been made to claims 1, 21 and 22 to address the concerns raised in the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance for all of the claims in the present application as amended are earnestly solicited in view of the following remarks.

Claims 13-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1, 21 and 22 have been amended to address the concerns raised in this rejection. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that all of the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, have been complied with and it is respectfully requested that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 1-8 and 10-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,516,387 to Holicer and claims 9 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Holicer in view of German document No. 1947093 to Wahli. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1, 13 and 22 of the present application recite pressure relief valves for minimizing the build up of materials on valve components and thereby facilitating the reliability and repeatability of the valve operation. Material build up may interfere with the operation of the valve by preventing a valve member from properly seating or causing the valve to open at a higher pressure than a set point for the valve. If the relief valve does not open at the proper set point, overpressure conditions may occur. The claims of the present application recite a spring coupled to the valve member and the housing so that the valve member contacts the seal surface and prevents such overpressure conditions. For instance, if the valve member separates from the seal surface as a result of a fluid pressure force on the valve member that is greater than the spring force, the pressure relief valve operates so that pressurized fluid passes through a discharge opening in the housing. Figures 2A and 2B of the present application illustrate examples of the valve operation.

Holicer is relied upon to disclose a valve apparatus for controlling and handling inflammable fluids. As illustrated in Fig. V, the valve apparatus of Holicer includes a body 1, a channel 16, a branch 53, a cross channel 53a, a valve head 54, ports 55, a valve spring 58, a

retaining plug 59, and an outlet 60. The relief valve is normally closed by the pressure and operation of the valve spring 58. However, Holicer does not disclose that the valve member separates from the seal surface upon the application of a fluid pressure force on the valve member that is greater than the spring force to allow pressurized fluid to pass through the discharge opening in the housing as claimed in the present application. As a result, Holicer does not disclose a pressure relief valve for minimizing the build up of material on the components of the valve for facilitating the reliability and repeatability of the valve operation as in the pressure relief valve claimed in the present application.

In the rejection to dependent claims 9 and 22, it is acknowledged that Holicer fails to suggest or imply an annular groove formed in the seal surface receiving an elastomeric seal ring and a base having a passage. Therefore, Wahli is relied upon to disclose a base and a valve enclosed by a cover 1. However, Wahli fails to cure the deficiencies of Holicer with respect to the spring force allowing pressurized fluid to pass through the discharge opening in the housing as recited in the base claims for dependent claims 9 and 22. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-22 of the present application patentably define over Holicer and the combination of Holicer and Wahli and it is respectfully requested that these rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn.

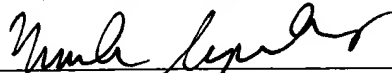
In view of these amendments and for all of the above stated reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the outstanding rejections have been overcome. Therefore, it is requested that claims 1-22 of the present application be passed to issue.

If any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney.

Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments to deposit account No. 50-0896.

Respectfully submitted,

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